**Olympian High School**

**Eleventh Grade English**

**Literary Analysis Essay**



**Writing Situation**: You are going to write a literary analysis essay about the short story, “The Devil and Tom Walker”, by Washington Irving. In this essay, you must convince the person reading your analysis, that specific characteristics of the story make it a true example of American Romanticism.

**PROMPT:** *In a multi-paragraph essay, explain the characteristics of “The Devil and Tom Walker” that make it an example of American Romanticism.*

**Objective**: Students will argue that specific characteristics within the story, “The Devil and Tom Walker” align with the philosophical assumptions and beliefs of Romanticism. Students will support this claim with a strong central idea (thesis), relevant evidence and thoughtful commentary. The essay must directly relate to the central idea and contribute to the reader’s understanding of that idea throughout.

**Literary Analysis Hook Ideas:**

1) **A startling fact or bit of information:**

Example: Nearly two hundred citizens were arrested as witches during the Salem

witch scare of 1692. Eventually nineteen were hanged, and another was

pressed to death (Marks 65).

2) **A snatch of dialogue between two characters**:

Example: “It is another thing. You [Frederic Henry] cannot know about it unless

you have it.”

“ Well,” I said. “If I ever get it I will tell you [priest].” (Hemingway 72).

With these words, the priest in Ernest Hemingway’s A Farewell to Arms sends

the hero, Frederic, in search of the ambiguous “it” in his life.

3) **A meaningful quotation (from the story you are analyzing):**

Example: “To be, or not to be, that is the question” {3.1.57}. This familiar

statement expresses the young prince’s moral dilemma in William

Shakespeare’s tragedy Hamlet, Prince of Denmark.

4) **A universal idea:**

Example: The terrifying scenes a soldier experiences on the front probably

follow him throughout his life—if he manages to survive the war.

**Independent Practice- Try to come up with all four different hooks for your essay:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Startling Fact |  |
| Dialogue |  |
| Meaningful Quote |  |
| Universal Idea |  |

**Paragraph 1: Introduction**

* Begin with an attention grabber (hook) sentence- usually a quote, fact, or universal idea.
* Provide some brief background information so that your audience becomes familiar with the topic (brief summary of the qualities/ideals/values of American Romanticism).
* Provide a Thesis Statement: **Explain how the short story, *The Devil and Tom Walker* is an example of American Romanticism.**

**Paragraph 2: Characteristic #1**

* Begin with a topic sentence (let the reader know which characteristic this paragraph will be about).
* State your first piece of evidence with parenthetical citation and/or an attributive tag.
* Write one elaboration sentence that explains the importance of this fact you just wrote.
* State another piece of evidence with parenthetical citation and/or an attributive tag.
* Write one elaboration sentence that explains the importance of this fact you just wrote.
* Write a transition sentence that reminds the reader what this paragraph was about, and hints at what the next paragraph is going to be about (see transition worksheet).

**Paragraph 3: Characteristic #2**

* Begin with a topic sentence (let the reader know which characteristic this paragraph will be about).
* State your first piece of evidence with parenthetical citation and/or an attributive tag.
* Write one elaboration sentence that explains the importance of this fact you just wrote.
* State another piece of evidence with parenthetical citation and/or an attributive tag.
* Write one elaboration sentence that explains the importance of this fact you just wrote.
* Write a transition sentence that reminds the reader what this paragraph was about, and hints at what the next paragraph is going to be about (see transition worksheet).

**Paragraph 4: Characteristic #3**

* Begin with a topic sentence (let the reader know which characteristic this paragraph will be about).
* State your first piece of evidence with parenthetical citation and/or an attributive tag.
* Write one elaboration sentence that explains the importance of this fact you just wrote.
* State another piece of evidence with parenthetical citation and/or an attributive tag.
* Write one elaboration sentence that explains the importance of this fact you just wrote.
* Write a concluding sentence that summarizes what this paragraph was about (see transition worksheet).

**Paragraph 5: Conclusion**

* Restate your thesis using different words.
* Remind the reader what they just read (summarize the essay).
* Write a concluding statement or clincher statement to leave your reader with one final thought ☺

**TRANSITION WORKSHEET**

**When moving from a topic sentence to a specific example**

* For example, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, for instance, demonstrates \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* Consider \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, for example.
* To take a case in point, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

**When moving from evidence into elaboration to clarify a previous idea**

* In other words, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* To put it another way, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* (*for evidence from a source*) What X is saying here is that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* (*for evidence from a source*) What \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ really means is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

**When shifting to a more, less, or equally important point about the same topic or evidence**

* Even more important, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* But above all, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* Incidentally, it is worthy of noting that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* Just as important, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* Equally, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* Finally, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

**When shifting to a similar point about a new piece of evidence or topic**

* Another aspect of X is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* This quality is also evident when \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* Another clear example of X is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* X is also apparent in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* This feature is similarly evident in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

**When extending elaboration to ward off potential misunderstandings**

* Essentially, X is not arguing not that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, but \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* This is not to say \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, but rather \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* This detail is less about \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ than \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* X is concerned less with \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ than with \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

**When elaborating to guide readers to your most general point**

* In sum, then, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* My conclusion, then, is that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* In short, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* Stated plainly, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* Ultimately, then, my goal is to demonstrate that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.